

NOTE XXIII.

ON ARVICOLA ARENICOLA DE SÉLYS

BY

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Mr. G. S. Miller Jr. from the Washington Museum, presently studying in the British Museum, fixed my attention upon a paper, published in 1841 by de Sélys Longchamps, relating an *Arvicola* represented in the Leyden Museum and described by him as new under the name of *A. arenicola*; Mr. Miller suggested that my *A. ratticeps* (Tijdschrift der Nederl. Dierk. Vereeniging, Deel V, 1881, p. 105) might be *arenicola* de Sélys.

The original description by de Sélys runs as follows (Bulletin de l'Académie Royale des Sciences et Belles-lettres de Bruxelles, Année 1841, Tome VIII, 2^{me} Partie, p. 236):
 » Un *Arvicola* que je n'ai pas encore décrit et que je désigne
 » sous le nom d'*Arvicola arenicola*. Je l'ai vu cette année
 » au Musée de Leyde. Cette espèce, qui a été recueillie
 » dans les digues de la Hollande par les soins de M. Tem-
 » minck, directeur du Musée Royal, diffère de l'*agrestis* par
 » ses pieds plus longs, plus robustes, sa queue plus longue
 » à poils grossiers (la queue a plus de 2 pouces, les pieds
 » postérieurs plus de 10 lignes). Ici il faut attendre encore
 » un examen plus approfondi pour pouvoir se prononcer en
 » dernier ressort''.

However de Sélys suggests (l. c. p. 236): » il est possible qu'il faudra encore réunir à l'*agrestis*'' his *arenicola* as well as *A. Baillonii* de Sélys and *A. neglecta* Thompson. In his

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Naturgeschichte der Säugethiere Deutschlands, 1857, p. 372, Blasius comes to a quite different conclusion, for he said: »*Arvicola arenicola* de Sélys stimmt nach einem Original-exemplare, welches ich der freundlichen Mittheilung de Sélys verdanke, im Gebiss und in der Ohr- und Fussbildung ganz mit *A. arvalis* überein, und kann also bestimmt nicht mit *Mus agrestis* L. oder mit *Lemmus insularis* Nilss. zusammengestellt werden". What is here Blasius' meaning? Had de Sélys forwarded to him one of the typical specimens of *arenicola* from the collection of the Leyden Museum? Mr. A. A. v. Bemmelen (Bouwstoffen voor eene Fauna van Nederland, derde deel, 1866, pp. 241 and 242) shared Blasius' opinion. Nowhere since 1866 the name *arenicola* has been used or cited in zoological literature; so that as I wrote in 1881 my paper on the mentioned *Arvicola*-specimens in our Museum, I had no notion whatsoever, that I did what one calls in France: »enfoucer une porte ouverte"! Moreover Blasius was at that time in Leyden and he (apparently forgotten that he, some years before, had in his hands one of our specimens called by de Sélys *arenicola*) agreed with me in bringing these *Arvicola*-specimens to *ratticeps* Blasius! In the »Sitzungs-Berichte der Gesellschaft naturforschender Freunde, 1899, p. 58" A. Nehring stated: »Herr Dr. Jentink war so freundlich mir den Schädel eines dieser Exemplare (sc. *ratticeps*) zur Ansicht zugehen zu lassen, so dass ich mich durch eigene Anschauung von seiner Zugehörigkeit zu *Arv. ratticeps* überzeugen konnte". In the very paper Nehring described some *Arvicola*-specimens from Brandenburg as a variety of *ratticeps*, viz. *Stimmingi*. Mr. Miller studied with me our *ratticeps*-specimens and, after having extracted the (incomplete) skulls, we made out that they did not belong to *ratticeps* at all, they might be perhaps *Stimmingi* Nehring, and I registered them under that name accordingly.

This may be called the nomenclatural part; I think the historical part now following bears much more interest.

In the years 1836 and 1837 the crop was devastated

in the neighborhood of Lisse, a village near Leyden, by great numbers of Mice; four specimens have been preserved in our Museum, apparently trapped, as the skulls are violently cracked; three are adult and one is a young. Under the old stand of one of the individuals has been written: »Arvicola qui a dévasté les champs en Hollande »dans les années 1836 et 1837 pris à Lisse, Hollande". This very probably may have been written on that stand by Mr. de Sélys Longchamps. This may be so or not, we may be sure that this and the other three Lisse-specimens are the very specimens described in 1841 by de Sélys Longchamps and therefore the type-specimens of *Arvicola arenicola* de Sélys Longchamps. His description is very shortly termed (see above), although very appropriate, so that a more detailed one must be drawn up. The reader is prayed to consider that a good portrait of the species cannot be given, as the animals have been stuffed and were for more than 60 years exposed to the influence of light and dust in our Museum!

Arvicola arenicola de Sélys Longchamps.



These photos represent the dentition enlarged $2\frac{1}{2}$ times; they have been made so extremely correctly that every further description is superfluous.

Size between *nivalis* and *arvalis*; tail double the length of that organ in *arvalis*; ears nearly hidden by the fur. Each hair of upperparts of a bluish black, tipped with reddish brown; underparts with the hairs also bluish black,

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tipped however with dirty white; the tail has the upperparts apparently colored like the back, meanwhile the underparts seem to be somewhat lighter in color; the extreme tip of the tail is black, in the three typical adult specimens at least.

head and body	136 m.M.
tail	43
hindfoot	20